

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF FAMILY SERVICES

P.O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

April 23, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: AREA EXECUTIVE STAFF, COUNTY DIRECTORS, AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES STAFF

FROM: DENISE CROSS, DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: CHILDREN'S SERVICES CONSUMER SURVEY REPORT (JULY – DECEMBER 2002)

DISCUSSION:

Quality service delivery is dependent upon feedback from all stakeholders. Consumer surveys are one mechanism used to obtain this feedback. Per Memorandum CS01-11 the updated consumer surveys were introduced to replace the previously used Consumer Postcards. Please refer to Memorandum CS01-11 for further detail regarding implementation and distribution.

This memorandum is to serve as the biannual report regarding feedback obtained from those who have received Children's Services. The distribution of these surveys began in July 2001. This report covers the 3rd and 4th quarters of calendar year 2002, including the period July - December.

The collection and appropriate use of information is vital to the ongoing quality improvement efforts of the agency. ***It is therefore expected that the following consumer feedback be examined through the CQI process at each level team meeting.*** Furthermore, all staff should be engaged in developing solutions to the areas of demonstrated agency challenge. The strategies developed should be documented through the CQI Activity Log, which is now entered into a statewide database. Please refer to memorandum CSEMO2-57 for further instruction on the use of the database. This will facilitate follow-up that may be required and idea sharing across CQI teams. Attached you will find detailed reports for each type of survey and pie charts that provide additional views of selected data.

Child Abuse and Neglect Survey: 

This survey is used to gather information regarding the investigation and assessment process. They are sent monthly to 10% of the Parent/Caretakers identified on the CA/N-1. A total of 2116 surveys were sent with a response rate of 14%. The response rate remained consistent from the previous reporting period, which is lower than desired. Additionally, there were 198 surveys returned as they were undeliverable to the family's address found on the SS-63. This provides further justification of the need to assure information is accurate in our management information system. Overall, the responses on this survey were positive and do not indicate significant change from the previous report.

Strengths

Initial family engagement
Explaining the reason for the visit
Families feel they are listened to
Families are able to share their stories

Challenges

Services helping families
Timely service delivery
Understanding the results of the report
Families feeling they are treated fairly
Families feeling they are treated with respect

There was slight improvement noted in the areas related to families receiving adequate and timely services, and we hope this improvement will continue. Unfortunately, there were slight decreases in positive responses and increases in the negative responses to the questions regarding whether families feel they were treated fairly and respectfully.

IIS Survey:

This survey is used to gather information pertaining to the IIS program. It is distributed to every family accepted into the program during a predetermined period. A total of 512 surveys were sent with a response rate of 18%. This is a slight increase from the 16% response rate identified in the previous report. This response rate is also fairly low and worthy of attention in exploring ways to increase. The responses on the IIS survey are fairly positive indicating families are satisfied with the interventions in which they have participated.

Strengths

Specialists are available at all times
All family members encouraged to participate
Families are listened to
Engagement of the family in goal setting
Timely services
Families are treated fairly and with respect

Challenges

Other services received helping the family
Families knowing their specialist
IIS helping keep the family together

The responses indicate families knowing their IIS specialist is still a challenge, as the affirmative responses decreased from 77% to 71%. Overall, respondents agree that the specialist listened to what they had to say, as the level of agreement increased by 2% and the level of disagreement decreased by 3%. Question #7 addresses receiving services when needed; the respondents increased their level of agreement by 6% and decreased their level of disagreement by 4% as well.

FCS Parent Survey:

This survey is used to gain feedback from parents or caregivers receiving assistance through Family Centered Services or Family Centered Out-of-Home Care. It is distributed to a percentage of families who have been working with the agency for at least 4 months. A total of 1122 surveys were sent with a response rate of 14%. As indicated in the CA/N survey section, this again is a very low response rate. Furthermore, there are a significant number of surveys returned to the agency as undeliverable due to incorrect address information located in the system. While there were some positive responses, the FCS Parent Survey indicated the most areas of needed improvement. *Note: On question #5, **blank** represents the question is not applicable to the family.*

Strengths

Families understand the need for intervention

Challenges

Families knowing their worker
Monthly worker visits
Families feeling listened to
Families visiting with children in foster care

Families planning for service delivery
Timely service delivery
Family satisfaction with services from agency
Families being treated fairly and with respect

Overall, there were slight increases in the following areas: families know their Children's Service Worker; worker visits at least monthly; families being included in the service planning process; and families knowing where to obtain help. There were decreases in the following areas: workers listening to what families have to say; families receiving services when needed; services helping families; families being satisfied; and families being treated with respect.

Foster Care Survey:

This survey is used to gather feedback from youth, ages 12 and older, served in Out-of-Home Care. The surveys are sent to 100 youth per month. A total of 600 surveys were sent with a response rate of 35%. This is a fairly good response rate, indicating youth served have a lot to share and desire to be involved in the planning of their future, yet was significantly reduced from the 46% response rate indicated in the last report. The large number of responses from those in residential treatment indicates our need to maintain consistent contact with these youth.

Strengths

Youth know why they are in care
Youth feel listened to by staff
Youth received help when needed
Youth have friends they can talk with
Youth have caring adults in their lives
Youth feel they are treated with respect

Challenges

Youth knowing their worker's name and phone number
Youth able to attend planning meetings
Staff visiting with youth two times per month
Youth knowing their permanency plans

In general, the results in this report are very similar to those of the previous report. Youth responses once again showed an increase in the affirmative with regard to question #2 that asks if they know their worker's name and phone number. Additionally, there was a significant increase in positive responses to the question related to youth feeling listened to by their workers. Unlike the last reporting period, there was a 9% decrease in responses indicating that youth were happy where they are living.

Vendor Survey:

This survey is used to gather information from Foster Parents and Relative Care Providers. It is distributed to 50 families randomly selected each month. A total of 300 surveys were sent with a response rate of 35%. This is another good response rate, indicating alternative care providers are also interested in participating in the service delivery process. Yet, as with the Foster Care Survey, there was a significant decrease in the response rate from the previous reporting period. Respondents report a 69% positive experience with the agency, while this was a 3% decrease from the previous report.

Strengths

Providers receive adequate training
There is open communication with DFS
DFS staff are courteous and friendly
Providers are provided supports necessary

Challenges

Providers having access to staff as needed
Providers being informed of court hearings

Overall, there were increases in the positive responses to this survey. This indicates special attention is being placed upon supporting foster parents in their role of caring for the children of Missouri.

CONCLUSION:

The results of this survey period indicate some general trends. These trends have also been identified through other quality improvement efforts. The trends point to the fact that we are good at engaging with the family up-front, but then fail to fully engage them in the service planning and delivery process. Feedback indicates time and energy is invested in the short-term interventions and those served in this manner are satisfied overall. Yet, it appears those least satisfied are receiving longer term interventions and often feel neglected by the agency, which is reflected in the fact that youth and parent/caretakers report that they do not have contact with workers on a regular basis. Although, this did improve somewhat from the previous report. Vendors are a valuable part of the process and the increases in positive responses on this survey indicates we are continuously working to improve our partnership.

The consumer survey process has provided the agency with a wealth of information that can be of great use for improvement efforts. It is therefore important to stress again that this information and potential solutions must be examined through the CQI process with the goal of improving the service delivery process, benefiting the children and families whom we serve.

NECESSARY ACTION:

1. Review this memorandum with all Children's Services staff.
2. Review the memorandum and reports in each CQI team meeting during the next quarter of CQI meetings. This includes first, site, area, and state level teams.
3. Develop and implement action plans to address identified issues. Send suggestions through the CQI process for action plans to area and state level teams when appropriate.
4. All comments and questions regarding this report should be cleared through normal supervisory channels to Vince Geremia, Quality Assurance/Improvement Manager, Central Office.

DC/LP/CB/VG

cc: Children's Justice Act Task Force
State Foster Parent Advisory Board
State Youth Advisory Board

Attachments:

[Child Abuse and Neglect Survey:](#) 

[IIS Survey:](#) 

[FCS Parent Survey:](#) 

[Foster Care Survey:](#) 

[Vendor Survey:](#) 

[Respect Pie Chart:](#) 

[Service Delivery Pie Chart:](#) 

[Service Planning Pie Chart:](#) 

[Family Engagement Pie Chart:](#) 